

# THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

THE INDUSTRIAL AND EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS OF OUR PEOPLE PARAMOUNT TO ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS OF STATE POLICY.

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## AGRICULTURE

### HARRY FARMER'S TALKS.

CXXVII.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

The season for setting strawberries is at hand. There has been some changes in the method of planting. Here is the plan followed by some of the most successful growers.

#### SETTING STRAWBERRIES.

The land is well plowed and the rows laid out. Some use manure or fertilizer, while others say do not put it on till after the plants have shown that they are alive. The bed is made about the size of cotton beds, then it is left until a rain has fallen sufficiently to settle the land. Then the plants are set from 9 to 18 inches apart. All growers do not agree on the distance or method of setting, but some of the most successful make a deep hole with a trowel or paddle by pushing it into the soil and then press it either forward or backward so that the hole is small in the bottom and large at the top. The plant is then shaken so that the roots hang down like the fringe on a curtain; then it is lowered into the hole so that the bud is just above the level of the bed. Then the trowel or paddle is pushed in the bed about two or three inches from the hole containing the plant; press the paddle toward the plant as tight as you well can. You can then put some soil in the last hole with paddle or kick a little with your foot so as to partially fill the hole. You see by this plan some of the roots of the plant will be very deep while others will be near the surface. If the weather should be dry the deep roots will save the plant.

Here are some points that all planters agree on: The roots of the plants should be yellow or white, never brown or black, as the last named color indicate old or diseased plants. Never water the plants, as that kills it. (We think that if the soil is carefully stirred in a few minutes the water would do good.)

#### CULTIVATION AFTER SETTING.

The earlier you plant, the more distance should be given. As soon as the plant is known to be alive, run the bar of the plow as close as you well can to the plant, not over two inches deep; then sow a medium grade of commercial fertilizer and cover this with a small furrow. Stir frequently enough to keep the weeds and grass down.

About the middle of February sow fertilizer at the same rate, or a little heavier if the land is poor, and work it in with rake or harrow. As the plants root near the surface in the early spring this will make the plants grow quite rapidly and thus insures a large crop.

#### GENERAL HINTS.

After trying different grades of fertilizer most planters now use brands that analyze about 8-2½-3 or 8-2-2. They claim that these grades make better berries than grades that run 8-3-3 or 8-4-5.

Do not put straw on until the plant begins to bloom. Then place it thickly enough to keep the berries out of the sand. Nearly all growers have quit trying to cover to keep off frost in the late spring, claiming that they lose more than they gain.

The rows should be about 3½ feet apart so that there will be room to work in the middle.

After the berries are done bearing run the plow within 6 or 8 inches of the plants and throw all the soil, thrash, etc., to the middle of the row. The rows then can be cleaned out and the middles can be plowed throwing the soil back to the plants which renders the after-cultivation much easier. The despised goose comes in mighty handy now. One or two to the acre, if middles of the rows are plowed once in 15 or 20 days, will keep all the grass down.

These plans apply to the Eastern part of the State. They may not suit the central counties so well.

HARRY FARMER.

#### Growing Cotton Shows General Improvement.

Washington, July 9.—The Weather Bureau's summer report of the condition of crops says: Cotton has made rapid growth throughout the cotton belt, an improvement being shown in all districts, the reports from the Carolinas and Georgia indicating the most decided advancement. Wet weather has, however, been unfavorable in portions of Louisiana and Texas, where the crop is grassy, being quite foul in northern Texas, in which State the boll-weevils are causing considerable damage and continue to increase.

In the most important tobacco States to-day tobacco has made fine growth, the condition of the crop being very promising in southwestern Ohio, where rain is badly needed. Cutting and curing continues in the Carolinas.

#### The Cow Pea for Hay.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

There is a great deal of land that will be lying idle during the summer months, as the result of cutting wheat, oats, etc. What can we do with this land so as to improve it, and at the same time secure a crop?

I believe there is nothing better for the farmer to do, than to follow his wheat land or oat stubble with cow peas. The labor required to do this work is not great, and when hay sells from \$15 to \$20 per ton, as it does throughout the greater part of the State, it seems reasonable that it is wisdom on the part of the farmer to devote a goodly area to this magnificent crop. It is not at all too late to do this work. If one does not care to dispose of the hay to the trade, the best practice is to secure enough cattle or sheep to consume all of the hay raised on the farm. Then too there is nothing better as feed for horses than cow-pea hay.

Why can we not start a movement throughout the State to follow all of our oat and wheat stubble with cow peas, and build up the live-stock industry in our State? There is no hay superior to the cow pea, either for the dairy or for the beef herd, and there is no crop that will more cheaply and more quickly improve land. The humus that is left in the soil, to say nothing of the great quantity of nitrogen that is stored there from growing cow peas, will more than pay for any effort that may be used in growing the crop. I am confident that its value to the soil will compensate any farmer for every bit of time and labor devoted to the growing of cow peas. The high commercial value, be it either for the market or for feeding purposes, is, therefore, clear profit to the farmer.

Think what it would mean to our State to have large areas each year given to this crop. Think of the live-stock that could be fed, and the manure that could be made, that is worth so many dollars, and hundreds of dollars, aye, thousands of dollars to the land devoted to this purpose. I think that the good gospel of cow-pea culture should be spread far and wide. It is the most important practical matter for us, and we should all be earnest advocates of the practice of growing cow peas.

I trust that we all may adopt this as one of our mottos: Grow cow peas.

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#### Wheat Growing in Western Carolina.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

It may be worth while to give our readers our experience with a few acres of wheat this year. We sowed four acres and threshed thirty-seven bushels. We selected the ground and broke well and harrowed and disked until we had a good seed bed. On one acre we sowed clover and cross-drilled the wheat at the rate of 1½ bushels to acre, the rest at one bushel to the acre. We gave the acre where we sowed 1½ bushel a top dressing of 100 pounds of nitrate of soda in April and it yielded 16 bushels—nearly as much as the other three acres. We really think from our observation that this dressing of nitrate of soda increased the yield 100 per cent, as the ground was all alike as near we could see. Besides this we now have a stand of clover on this plot knee high.

We also sowed one acre from seed bought in Indiana, said to be very fine wheat. It was a complete failure, making only three bushels. Our conclusions from this is to be very careful where you get your seed wheat and be sure it is adapted to your section before sowing.

We have one farmer that made 67 bushels from 1⅞ acres. Can anybody beat that this season?

Our crop is very nearly a complete failure this season, owing to the Hessian fly and rust. We have sent the United States Department of Agriculture the names of over 500 farmers for their bulletins on the Hessian fly. We don't think that enough of our farmers write for these valuable publications, and we try and help them out by sending their names to the Department. Smaller acreage and better tillage will be the result of this year's experience, and who knows but that it will turn out to be a blessing in disguise?

Our people are buying more and better cattle and hogs, and we believe there will be 15 or 20 cars of cattle fattened around Hickory this winter. If they only make the manure clear, it is a good profit.

We did not intend to write such a long letter, but have not the facility of condensing what we wish to say. One word and we are through. The following varieties of cow peas brought the most money to the farmers in our section this year; they were shipped out for seed all over the United States: Whipporwill, Black, New Era, Clay. Red Ripper and white mixed peas were dull and not wanted by the trade.

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